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EDITORIAL

Training in a little autocracy is poor preparation for citizenship in a big democracy. When that rather obvious truth gets itself generally recognized, the current system of formal textbook assignment and recitation-examination following will be utterly and eternally damned. There are signs which seem to indicate that the day of doom is appreciably nearer than it was four years ago.

C'est la guerre, of course. The great struggle has slowly defined itself as the—last, we fondly hope—death grapple of two opposed types of social life, the feudal and the modern. The modern is sure to win. Meanwhile hoary traditions grow less sacred. Democracy itself moves forward by leaps and bounds.

What is democracy in theory and practice as exemplified in the school and college classroom? Not a relationship of dictator and servile subjects certainly. Rather is it that of leader, coach, and friend with intelligent, voluntary, purposeful followers, workers, learners, who know how and why they learn.

The technique of classroom activity governed by the social-group conception we are just beginning to learn. To some it appears, and is, mere freedom, ungoverned by necessary law, self-imposed or other. But here and there a new and successful organization reveals itself, providing both for initiative and full self-direction and participation and for definite mastery of the arts of civilized life. To develop and perfect this democratic method of instruction in order to educate for full and useful participation in the work and play of this our common life is a great, perhaps the greatest, opportunity of the schoolmaster today.